TL 5841

Contemporary Artist

Independence Day Celebrations

13-21 May 2002

Art Exhibition on the Occasion of Independence Day

Sebastiao Silva

Timorese Artist, born in Dili from a modest family of farmers in Comoro.

Sebastiao spent most of his youth in the field toiling side - by - side with peasants in the mornings, and afternoons studying at Exto. De Sao Jose - Balide. It was there that he was introduced to oil painting by Father Domingos Morato da Cunha in the early 80's. During that time art was only a past time amongst friends.

He left Timor in 1984, spending six months in Jakarta and then found his way to Portugal, migrating one year latter to Australia.

Five years later he came back to Timor to visit his family and relatives. It was then that Sebastiao was reminded of his natural talent, his personal vocation.

In 1990 the passion within him burst and he decided to take up painting more seriously.

In 1992 the first ever solo exhibition took place in Lisbon. Sebastiao returned to Australia after a short while and decided to make painting his career, giving up almost everything and dedicated most of his day time painting and working by night.
His works were exhibited throughout many galleries around Australia and some in Portugal.

In October 1999 he came to Timor as an interpreter for M.D.M. two months later resigned and went back to Australia, returning again to Dili in 2000. He has lived in Timor ever since.
Finally he can paint and exhibit in his home town.

Sebastiao Silva paints Timor, the faces and the spaces, with a realism that touches us through its depth, its texture, the strong presence of colour.

Landscapes of coast and mountain play behind characters, engaged in their daily lives, at work and at play, in movement and in pause.

Faces and bodies which translate the essence of being East Timor, presented as much from experience as from memory.

Each canvas shows us villages that, today, only exist in one's imagination, fields which were painted with yesterday in mind but which become almost eternal, translating secular habits and practices.

Sebastiao Silva uses his experience of knowing East Timor on the inside, or living it from the outside during long years of forced exile. Within himself and in his work, he confronts the two realities, the nostalgic, the imagined with the real, the recurrent of the land he will always call his.

The rural world is a recurrent constant, with the coast of the island appearing only now. Sebastiao Silva prefers the interior, the mountainous, the space that receives and sustains the large majority of the population.

He brings this world to the city and when you look at his work it is almost impossible not to engage in the same trip.

EXHIBITIONS

2001 - Farol Dili

1999 - National Gallery of Victoria - Australia

1998 - Circulo Universitario do Porto - Portugal
- Faculdade de letras de Lisbos - Portugal
- Universidade de Aveiro - Portugal

1997 - Hotel Tivoli - Portugal

1996 - Stanthorp Arts Festival in Queensland - Australia

1995 - Queensland University of Technology - Australia
- N T University Gallery - Australia
- Darwin Entertainment centre - Australia

1994 - Meatworkers building in Queensland - Australia
- Steps Gallery in Victoria - Australia

1993 - Tom Nelson Hall in NSW - Australia
- Darwin Performing Arts Centre - Australia
- Sala D. Joao V Damaia - Portugal

1992 - Padrao dos Descobrimentos in Lisbon - Portugal